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Friday, February 14, 2014

THE MORNING NEWS

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Venezuela urges 'anti-fascism' rally

CARACAS (AFP) - Venezuela's government Thursday called for its supporters to rally against what it called fascism, a day after three people died and dozens were injured in violence at anti-government protests.

Thousands demonstrated Wednesday against rampant crime, inflation and shortages of basic goods in the biggest challenge to President Nicolas Maduro since he took over from the late Hugo Chavez last year.

The ensuing unrest prompted Maduro to warn of a coup attempt, and he vowed he would not be overthrown.

On Thursday the government remained defiant, and Venezuela's information and tourism ministers put out a call for a new rally for late

morning.

"We will gather at the attorney general's office to repudiate violence and fascism. The coup plan will be defeated again!" wrote Tourism Minister Andres Isarra.

The government has also ordered the arrest of one of the top opposition figures, Leopoldo Lopez, a former mayor of one of Caracas' five districts, according to local newspaper El Universal.

The paper published a photo showing the arrest warrant for Lopez, 42, who is accused of homicide and conspiracy.

Wednesday's protests ended with three people shot to death.

The victims were a pro-government demonstrator and two student opposition protesters.

Cont. on pg 6



Carlito Duarte is an example of inspiration and perseverance. A young man that works hard everyday, selling his products on the streets of Aruba.

In 2006, when he was 23 and working as a bartender, he was in a car accident that left him comatose. Doctors had no hope for Carlito; they diagnosed him brain dead. Present, after more than a year in a wheelchair, several treatments and continuing physiotherapy here and in the Dominican Republic, Carlito still shows physical symptoms of his neurological trauma, but his mind is clear and his memory perfect. Tremors, a limp and some aphasia, a physical inability to fully vocalize and form words, are noticeable, but improving with hard work. Carlito is determined to fully recuperate.

It was a long struggle, but finally he regained much of his mobility, and was looking for some way to "pull his weight," help his mother with the bills and support himself to some degree. A friend suggested he buy wholesale and go out selling treats, over the past few years, he became an Oranjestad icon, standing on a street corner offering his snacks for sale. He is always dressed in white, as this is how he saw Jesus while in his coma, and this is his tribute for regaining his life. Not all of us have the opportunity to meet and be inspired by someone who has triumphed over personal tragedy, perhaps it would do us all some good to do so. Carlito believes he has learned humility from his experience. Carlito is an inspiration to many and for us here at THE MORNING NEWS he surely is someone who deserves our admiration.

Today on Valentine's Day Carlito wishes everyone on Aruba a great day filled with love and happiness.

"Happy Valentine's Day from us all!"



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Government reports high interest from investors in Seroe Colorado

SAN NICOLAS -- During the ceremonial introduction of the construction of the Serena Residences project, The Minister of Economic and Energy Affairs, Mike de Meza, reported that just like Glenn Briezen, there is a great deal of interest from investors and local developers in the Seroe Colorado area. They are interested in the touristic potential of the area.

The Minister indicated that the infrastructure projects currently in progress at different points of the district, in addition to the Economic Zone that was created is what has made the area so attractive. The Economic Zone covers the area from the top of Seroe Colorado where water meets the soil up to the Marine Camp. This is why the Minister indicated that not only Seroe Colorado, but also the part of Boca Grandi to the back must be considered. Investors are also viewing this area for potential touristic development.

According to de Meza,...

"in addition to the fiscal benefits that the government has offered investors who want to open a business in San Nicolas, there is also the benefit of the labor force. The quality of workers in San Nicolas is very high. 80% of the San Nicolaas population works in the hotel sector. Anyone who invests in San Nicolaas will be guaranteed a labor force near to home and of high quality." There is an interest in the hospitality sector, to build bungalows, condominiums, boutique hotels, etc.

The government approves of these ideas, but at the same time will be guiding the projects to ensure that they comply with our legal requirements. They are also keen on ensuring that these projects take natural surroundings and the people of San Nicolas into consideration. For example, the Serena Residences had to be coupled to the area and allow free access by the public to the Rodgers Beach and surrounding areas.

Endorse efforts to seek service from London ASDC calls on LIAT and WINAIR to work together to improve connectivity to SXM Airport

SIMPSON BAY, St. Maarten — Considering that effective connectivity is a critical factor in increasing the hub function of the Princess Juliana International Airport (SXM), members of the Air Service Development Committee (ASDC) have called on regional airlines, LIAT and WINAIR to work together to achieve this goal. They made the call at the inaugural meeting of the Committee set up to further develop air service to SXM.

The meeting was attended by representatives from the country partners, St. Maarten, St. Martin, Anguilla, St. Barths, Dominica, St. Eustatius, Nevis, as well as regional carriers LIAT and WINAIR, and St. Maarten Immigration officials.

The country partners said they recognize the importance of SXM Airport's contribution to the success of their respective economies and agreed to work with SXM to make it an effective hub.

The ASDC meeting further concurred that service to and from London would be a welcome addition and pledged to cooperate with SXM Airport to make this a reality.

While the airport is not responsible for the physical movement of passengers, it is part of its tasks to create an environment that would

encourage airlines to provide the much needed connectivity.

In addition, the ASDC members agreed to the following joint activities:

- Obtaining primary and secondary data to support market development and access
- Increasing existing airlift and improving connectivity

- Joint marketing to maximize airline seating capacity to ensure profitability for airlines.

The ASDC is in the process of creating a complementary brand that would reflect the partnership among all participants and country partners.

The next meeting is scheduled for mid-March.

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Kia Motors Global has increased their sales by 2.6% in January

	January 2014	January 2013	Year-on-Year Change
Global Sales	216,606	211,088	2.6%
Overseas Sales	182,606	174,838	4.4%
By Vehicle Category (Overseas Sales)			
Passenger	115,753	111,674	3.7%
RV	63,019	59,253	6.4%
Commercial	3,834	3,911	-2.0%
By Region			
North America	40,894	39,975	2.3%
Europe	39,093	38,059	2.7%
China	62,446	57,575	8.5%
General Markets	40,173	39,229	2.4%
Domestic/Korea	34,000	36,250	-6.2%



Kia posted their growth in China with 8.5%, which is 40,173 units sold. Europe also had a growth of 2.7% which is the equivalent of 39,093 units. In the general market, this was 2.4% and equal to 40,173 units. In North America there was a growth of 2.3% which is equal to 40,894 units sold.

Kia's Best Selling Model for January 2014 is the Kia Cerato with a total of 38,104 units sold.

In second place was Kia Rio with a total of 36,400 units sold and in third place was the Sportage (33,315), Optima (18,144) and the Sorento (13,860).

Executive Vice President & COO, Thomas Oh, of Kia Motors Corporation said, "it is stimulating to begin 2014 with positive sales in all our biggest markets. The Kia brand has indeed evolved itself and has profiled itself as a major mainstream player in the industry over the years."

New products with a surprising character covers the full spectrum for, among oth-

ers, the launching of the K900 (Kia Quoris) luxury sedan in the USA. Up to the most recent launch of Kia, which was the first global full-electric vehicle...Soul EV. This will be debuted on the market later this year. We are anxious to continue delighting customers around the world in 2014."

Top 5 Selling Cars Overseas		
Rank	Model	January 2014 Sales Units
1	Cerato	38,104
2	Rio	36,400
3	Sportage	33,315
4	Optima	18,144
5	Sorento	13,860

The Kia Motors Corporation has recently announced that their global sales for January 2014 reached a record 216,606 units sold. This is a growth of 2.6% compared to sales of January 2013.

In the month of January

"You don't have to wait until Valentines Day to show someone how much they mean to you."



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A little something to make life easier...

Dick Plante and his clever hands



ORANJESTAD -- Anyone on the island, but particularly expatriates, know the frustrations of getting something repaired that needs a specialized part. Whether for your car, and expensive air-conditioning unit you are unwilling to replace, or a particular item for a boat or construction project.

We at THE MORNING NEWS had serendipitously discovered there is a solution, when accidentally coming upon the business card of Dick Plante, who founded Dick's Machine Shop tucked away in Pos Chiquito fourteen years ago.

Dick is a whiz of a Precision Toolmaker with a "Can

do" attitude of "No job is too small and rush jobs are always welcome." Presently, he is tooling specialized holders for a new sprinkler system for a large-scale agriculture project by the Santa Rosa Center of Agriculture, Animal Husbandry and Fisheries. However, he still took out the time to produce our small

project within a day, and at a very, very nice price.

Dick and his wife Judi relocated from the U.S. in 2002, with the expectation he would be sub-contracting to Coastal Oil, which operated the refinery in San Nicolas at the time. When that fell through, he went about scavenging clients for his unique talents, and soon gained a following, particularly among those repairing cars and construction companies. He has over 40 years experience in the field.

Finding the exact car part, particularly such things as rotors, bushings, piston heads, and drive shaft couplings, and a myriad number of other parts, is a difficult and often expensive process here. One truck owner we know was quoted \$1500 dollars for such a part, which Dick has reproduced more than once for a fraction of the price.

He has a fully equipped machine shop, and keeps a goodly supply of all the metals needed for such jobs, as well as heavy duty plastic. A major portion of the jobs he does include the hydraulics

for boats, as well as the many other specialized items sailboats and yachts require. He does Bridgeport Milling and lathe work of all types, as well as surface and cylindrical grinding. He makes customized window guards, gates and fences, and does all sorts welding work. He even repaired one client's beloved fry pan, which she had used so much over the decades she wore a hole in it, but just didn't want to replace.

Another great advantage is he has hours from 6:00 AM to 4:00 PM, Monday through Thursday, and morning house from 8:00 AM until noon on Friday, Saturday and Sunday...for those weekend repairmen who are held up from continuing the job.

We found Dick Plante to be a cheerful and open minded about creating something for our special need, but he is also very direct about if he can't do the job...but that is extremely rare. Dick can be reached at 593-7090 or send him an e-mail with a picture of what you need to plante@setarnet.aw.

Aruba to have one of the biggest and most beautiful Carnival Museums in the world



Aruba's Carnival & Festival Museum

SAN NICOLAS -- The first project is completed. Its phase of the Carnival Village

debut will be the Caiso and

Calypso Monarch Festival. In the future the complex will be managed by the Stichting Carnival Museum. The construction of that facility will begin later this year. Once completed, Aruba will have the biggest and most beautiful Carnival Museum in the world, according to Minister Mike de Meza.

The site for the Carnival Museum will be where the Green Hill Supermarket is. This supermarket was bought by the government last year. The project file has already been submitted to the FDA for their evaluation. The government hopes that by the second quarter of 2014 the

project can be presented for public tender. This will be a rather big complex which will run from the Bernhardstraat up to Pastoor Hendrikstraat. This is considered a small industry of itself.

The government foresees that this museum will attract thousands of tourists who will come to learn about the history of Aruba's famous Carnival, says Minister de Meza. The intention is that the museum should generate its own funds for their operations and investment in Carnival.

The museum will display everything pertaining to Carnival but primarily road pieces that won prizes in previous Carnival festivities.

Carnaval Schedule

- Thu - Feb 13:** Pre-Final Caiso & Soca Monarch 2014
(Location - The Carnaval Village in San Nicolas) 7 p.m.
- SAT - Feb 15:** Grand Final Caiso & Soca Monarch 2014
(Location - The Carnaval Village in San Nicolas) 8 p.m.
- SUN - Feb 15:** Grand Children's Carnaval Parade San Nicolas - 12 p.m.

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Snowstorm brings drudgery and tragedy to US east

NEW YORK (AFP) - A deadly winter storm swept the eastern United States on Thursday spelling drudgery for millions and tragedy for a few, including an expectant mother killed by a snowplow.

US media counted at least 11 dead as a result of the storm, which dropped a thick blanket of snow over eastern cities overnight and shut down federal government operations in Washington.

One of the casualties was a 36-year-old pregnant woman, struck and killed by a snowplow in a New York parking lot.

Her baby was delivered alive by cesarean section but remains in critical condition.

Thousands of travelers were stranded as major air hubs such as Atlanta and New York, were closed down. Washington's Dulles International reported 14 inches (35 centimeters) of snow.

More than 6,000 flights were cancelled outright, and more than 3,000 delayed.

Nearly 800,000 homes and businesses lost power, mainly in Georgia and North and South Carolina.

As the storm moved north, the US National Weather

Service warned that the "mammoth dome" of Arctic air would bring Arctic misery to communities from Georgia to New England.

In Washington, commuters woke to find their cars buried under a foot (30 centimeters) of snow, buses cancelled and city services struggling to keep even major roads open.

Schools were shut and the streets of the capital eerily deserted as federal workers stayed home or worked to scrape snow off sidewalks and driveways.

New York had an easier start but was forecast to receive a heavier covering as the storm churns up the east coast.

Meanwhile, "thundersleet" a foul mix of lightning storms and mixed precipitation, was brewing in Virginia and heading north.

Broadcasters fell over themselves to find superlatives to describe this "Snow-mageddon," dubbed "historic" and "mindboggling."

The storm is only the latest severe weather to hit the eastern United States in what was already the worst winter in 10 years.

Venezuela urges 'anti-fascism' rally

Cont. from pg 1

Maduro supporters also rallied Wednesday in Caracas and in other cities.

"There will be no coup d'état in Venezuela; you can rest assured. Democracy will continue, and the revolution will continue," Maduro declared on national television.

"Anyone who goes out to try to carry out violence will be arrested," he pledged.

At least 80 people were detained Wednesday. These included a photographer and reporter covering the protest, the journalists union said.

And Colombian news channel NTN24, which had

been featuring the protests in depth, was abruptly pulled off air.

Venezuela -- with an institutionally socialist government dependent on oil revenues in a state-led system -- sits atop the world's largest proven reserves of crude.

Yet its economy has been battered by inflation of more than 50 percent a year.

Venezuela has had economic problems go from bad to worse amid shortages of hard currency, while dwindling supplies of consumer goods have frustrated even some government supporters.

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Indonesia orders 200,000 to evacuate as volcano erupts

JAKARTA (AFP) - Hundreds of thousands of Indonesians were ordered to evacuate Friday after a volcano on the main island of Java erupted spectacularly, hurling red hot ash and rocks over a huge distance.

The alert status for Mount Kelud, considered one of the most dangerous volcanoes on densely populated Java, was raised late Thursday just hours before it began erupting.

TV pictures showed ash

and rocks raining down on nearby villages as terrified locals fled in cars and on motorbikes towards evacuation centres.

National disaster agency spokesman Sutopo Purwo Nugroho said that some 200,000 people from 36 villages in a 10-kilometre (six-mile) area around Kelud, in Kediri district in eastern Java, were being asked to evacuate.

"A rain of ash, sand and rocks is reaching up to 15 kilometres (nine miles)" from

the volcano's crater, he said.

"Sparks of light can be continuously seen at the peak."

The 1,731-metre (5,712-foot) Mount Kelud has claimed more than 15,000 lives since 1500, including around 10,000 deaths in a massive 1568 eruption.

It is one of some 130 active volcanoes in Indonesia, which sits on the Pacific Ring of Fire, a belt of seismic activity running around the basin of the Pacific Ocean.

Second Stephen King novel for 2014 announced

WASHINGTON (AFP) - Stephen King announced Thursday a second novel to hit bookstores this year, a tale of God and the Devil that starts in a small New England town in the mid-20th century.

On his website, the best-selling American suspense novelist said "Revival" would

be published on November 11 by US publisher Scribner and Britain's Hodder and Stoughton.

It finds a young rock musician, Jaime Morton, grappling with his demons, crossing paths with a preacher from his hometown, Charles Jacobs, who curses

God in the wake of a family tragedy.

King, 66, has another novel, the thriller "Mr. Mercedes," slated to be published on June 3 -- on the heels of an ebook version of last year's potboiler "Joyland" to appear sometime in April.



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Brazilians hand in Snowden asylum petition

BRASILIA (AFP) - Brazilian campaigners Thursday handed in a one million names-strong petition asking asylum for US intelligence whistleblower Edward Snowden.

In a comic take on efforts to give the former National Security Agency employee a refuge, a man clad in a giant papier mache head bearing Snowden's likeness tried to grasp a giant passport held by another campaigner purporting to be Brazilian President Dilma Rousseff.

Holding Rousseff back was a third campaigner wearing a papier mache mock-up of US President Barack Obama.

Global campaigning organization Avaaz launched the petition in December and has since obtained 1.1 million online signatures from around the globe demanding Rousseff offer Snowden, currently in

Russia, refuge.

"The Brazilian government had said it required a formal request from Snowden to grant asylum. Today, more than a million people have done what Snowden cannot and presented this request in his name," said Avaaz director Ricken Patel in a statement.

"We are handing in the document to the foreign ministry," Avaaz campaigns director Michael Freitas Mohallem told AFP.

Snowden wrote an open letter to Brazil published in December praising the country as one of the world's "most interesting and vibrant democracies."

In the letter, Snowden said he was ready to help the Brazilian Senate's investigation of US eavesdropping, which targeted the communications of President Dilma

Rousseff and Petrobras, the state oil giant.

But he added he was not offering to swap information for asylum.

The NSA snooping infuriated Rousseff, who canceled a state visit to Washington scheduled for October in protest, and pushed for a UN resolution aimed at protecting "online" human rights.

But she has not commented on a possible asylum request as Brazil says it has not received one.

The foreign ministry confirmed that remained the case and a spokesman said Thursday's petition would be handed over to the justice ministry.

Earlier this month, a Communist Brazilian senator nominated Snowden for this year's Nobel Peace Prize, judging his leaks had contributed to world peace.

US anger as Afghanistan releases 65 'insurgents'

KABUL (AFP) - Scores of alleged Taliban fighters walked free from jail in Afghanistan on Thursday, triggering condemnation from the United States, as President Hamid Karzai accused Washington of "harassing" his country's judicial authority.

The controversial decision to free the prisoners further worsened the bitter relationship between Kabul and Washington as US-led foreign troops prepare to withdraw after 13 years of fighting Islamist militants.

US officials said those released from Bagram prison were responsible for killing NATO and Afghan soldiers as well as civilians. But Karzai defended the release and hit back at US criticism.

Afghan officials said the men were vetted before their release.

The US embassy in Kabul criticised the releases as "a deeply regrettable" move that could lead to further violence in Afghanistan, which has suffered a bloody Taliban insurgency since 2001.

Karzai has called Bagram prison a "Taliban-producing factory" and alleged that some detainees were tortured into hating their country.

The US military described the men as "dangerous individuals" directly linked to attacks which killed or wounded 32 NATO personnel and 23 Afghans.

It gave names and details of

three men to be freed, including Mohammad Wali, describing him as a suspected Taliban explosives expert "biometrically linked" to two bombings against troops in Helmand province.

Plans to free the men have enraged US officials and become a focus point of strained relations as the two countries

wrangle over a security deal, which would allow some American soldiers to stay in the country after 2014.

Most US and other foreign troops are scheduled to pull out this year, but a small force may stay to conduct training and counter-terrorism missions.

Mexican President Enrique Peña Nieto

WASHINGTON - After one year in office, President Enrique Peña Nieto, 47, has passed the most ambitious package of social, political and economic reforms in memory. "I believe the conditions are very favorable for Mexico to grow," Peña Nieto told TIME in an interview. "I'm very optimistic." He'll share that optimism with Barack Obama when the U.S. President arrives in Mexico for a North American leaders summit on Feb. 19. But "Mexico's moment," as many are calling it, could still disappoint. Corruption and mismanagement are endemic to Mexican politics. Some of Peña Nieto's reforms are engendering fierce resistance. And drug trafficking, with its related crime and violence, remains a defining fact.



Chanel No. 5 at stake as EU sniffs out allergens?

BRUSSELS (AFP) - Europe's grand old perfume houses and organic cosmetic newcomers may be looking at a major clean-out as the EU sniffs out ingredients blamed for skin allergies in up to 15 million people.

A report by the EU's Scientific Committee on Consumer Safety (SCCS) found three allergens -- HICC and moss extracts atranol and choroatranol, which give a woody bouquet such as that in Chanel No. 5 -- were "not safe", the Commission said.

The three have been implicated in thousands of allergy cases, especially eczema, and should be banned from cosmetic products, it said.

Another 12 chemicals and eight natural extracts used to give perfumes a rose or lemon fragrance "were identified as substances of special concern," the Commission added.

The 12 chemicals should be subject to concentration limits, it said, with all listed in product labels.

"We are not targeting any particular perfume," said EU Consumer Affairs Commissioner Neven Mimica.

"There is no question of banning Chanel No. 5."

But if member states back the Commission position, then some perfumes, including some of the leading brands, will have to be "reformulated", he added.



Perversely, it will be organic cosmetics which will be worst affected, despite claims to purity and naturalness.

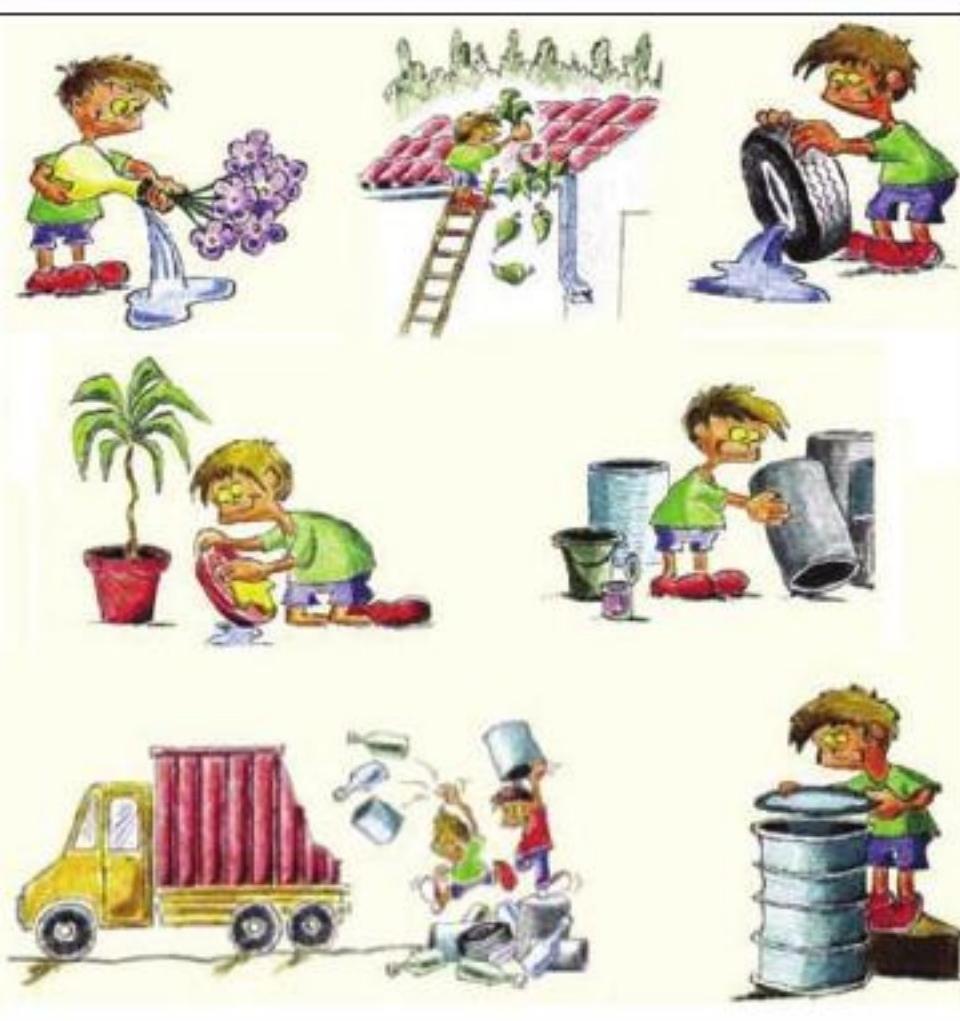
"According to industry estimations, some 90 percent of products will have to be modified," a major challenge for mostly small companies, an EU source said.

Mimica said luxury perfume manufacturers are better placed to cope and have already made some of the changes.

They will also get perhaps up to five years to meet the new rules once these are adopted, likely in 2015, so "they can preserve their world leadership," he added.

The measures will be put to public consultation for three months, before being put up to member states.

Let's Be Dengue Free



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Dutch euthanasia minister 'likely killed': police

THE HAGUE (AFP) - Former Dutch health minister Els Borst, who helped introduce the world's first euthanasia law in 2002 and who was found dead in her garage this week, was "likely killed", police said Thursday.

"The investigation so far has shown that her death was likely the result of a crime," police said in a statement after her lifeless body was found on Monday. She was 81.

Two pathologists "concluded that an injury on her body led to her death and so this was not a natural death," police said, appealing for help in piecing together her final days and hours.

Borst's body was discovered by a friend on Monday evening in the garage of her Dutch home in the central town of Bilthoven.

Known for her progressive and liberal attitude towards medicine, Borst, who was a physician, was the Dutch health minister from 1994-2002.

The Netherlands scored a world first under her tenure when it adopted the first euthanasia law in 2001 and which came into force in April 2002.

Euthanasia under close medical supervision is increasingly popular as a way to end life in the Netherlands and nearly 4,000 people undertook the practice in 2012.

Belgium adopts euthanasia law for children

BRUSSELS (AFP) - Twelve years after legalising euthanasia for adults, Belgium's parliament extended the right to die to terminally ill children of any age Thursday, despite opposition from the Church and some paediatricians.

After months of heated debate, the lower House of Representatives adopted the legislation by a large majority, making the largely Catholic country the second after the Netherlands to allow mercy-killing for children, and the first to lift all age restrictions.

The ground-breaking legislation was adopted by 86 votes in favour, 44 against and with 12 abstentions. Belgium is one of three countries in Europe to allow euthanasia for adults.

"It is not a question of imposing euthanasia on anyone ... but of allowing a child not to agonise in pain," said Socialist MP Karine Lalieux ahead of the vote.

Unlike the Dutch across the border, where euthanasia is allowed for children over 12, the law states that any incurably sick child may request to end their suffering if "conscious" and equipped with a capacity of discernment".

Socialist senator Philippe

Mahoux, author of Belgium's historic 2002 "right to die" legislation and himself a doctor, had called for the law to be widened to minors so as to offer a legal framework for medics for helping children in pain die as a question of mercy, but outside the law.

Euthanasia is "the ultimate gesture of humanity" and "not a scandal", he said. "The scandal is illness and the death of children from disease."

The law offers the possibility of euthanasia to children "in a hopeless medical situation of constant and unbearable suffering that cannot be eased and which will cause death in the short-term".

Counselling by doctors and a psychiatrist or psychologist is required, as is parental approval.

Before its adoption by a huge majority in the Senate in December, the upper house consulted dozens of medical specialists, lawyers and interest groups.

In recent days, the Catholic Church staged "a day of fasting and prayer" in protest and this week some 160 paediatricians petitioned lawmakers to postpone the vote on the grounds it was both ill-prepared and unnecessary.

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Aruba's most successful developers of secure, superior communities for both the permanent and part time resident market, will soon break ground on what they consider their most exclusive project to date. Known for 16 years of unmatched quality and service, the Cas Bon people are proud to unveil their

new pet project: O Condominiums. This is the same company which developed the innovative Gold Coast Villas community in Malmok.

Renowned for reliable onstruction, developers of O Condominiums consider the boutique community will be the "jewel in the crown" of

the nine projects they have successfully completed and maintain. It is only three stories and twenty luxurious units, of which 14 will be oceanfront, the remainder, ocean view. Sizes range from one bedroom condominiums with a bath and a half to three-bedrooms, each bedroom with its own bath, and an addi-

tional guest half/bath. The designs include a family entertainment room that will be specially fitted with electronic and Internet connections and outlets enabling a state-of-the-art-home theater. An important aspect of this singular facility is owners have various options to customize kitchens and fixtures to their particular tastes and standards.

Each apartment sports an extremely spacious 35 square meter covered terrace overlooking the sea. Windows will be double-paned and doors have weather stripping to insure less cost on air-conditioning, which is integrated into construction. Homeowners will have input into the finishing they prefer in the kitchen and other rooms, to customize your condominium to your taste. Public amenities will include an elegant pool deck, concierge services, lounge area, BBQ station, fitness room, assigned parking, addi-

tional outside storage for bicycles and personal items, and 24-hour security. A quiet, secluded section of Eagle beach is only a few steps from the front door.

O Condominiums officially opened the doors of their sales office onsite at Eagle Beach on December 24. Interested parties can inspect the project in a spacious plot right next to the gourmet Screaming Eagle restaurant. The project is directed towards discerning clients seeking a top quality property on Aruba in an ideal, tranquil, beachfront location. Prospective property owners will find the Cas Bon people enjoy an exceptional reputation on Aruba for excellence and reliability.

Contact the sales office at 297-732-0000/ 297-287-5300 or visit their website: <http://www.o-eagle-beach.aruba.com>

Exciting Harley motorcade on Aruba with over 200 bikers



to join our local Harley clubs for a run around the island.

Captain of the Canadian group was pleasantly surprised to see the large group of local bikers who welcomed their visiting "brothers and sisters in arms" taking into account that Tuesday is a normal working day.

Together with the local bikers the group counted over 200 participants for the joint ride which began at 8:30 a.m., under the guidance and watchful eye of Aruba's motorized police officers.

Prior to the ride, captain of the Canadian Harley group handed plaques to several individuals who collaborated in making this ride possible. Minister of Transport, Tourism, Culture and Primary Section, Otmar Oduber was also present to welcome the bikers on the island. He expressed the wish to see this kind of event more often, as it is a great promotion for Aruba.

Special recognition went to captain of the 'Nos cu Nos' Harley group, Tony Bosch, who was the driving force behind the event. He received a handsome plaque and was baptized as the 'Godfather of the Harley ride' in Aruba.

Michelle Begin of Canada, who is well known on Aruba,



as a frequent visitor who founded and organized the "Miss Canada" Fundraising Volleyball tournament over the last two years, was on the cruise and accompanied the bikers during their tour.

Needless to say they were very pleased with the treatment they received here and promised to return soon.

The Morningnews crew posing with Michelle Begin(L), "Miss Canada"

ORANJESTAD — Tuesday morning, February 11, the cruise ship Eclipse of the Celebrity Cruise line moored in the Oranjestad Harbor. On board was a group of 38 dedicated Harley riders hailing from Canada. The bikers came

here on invitation of the 'Nos cu Nos' Harley group of Aruba.

After clearing all the necessary official documents, the bikers were allowed to disembark on Aruba with their own Harley-Davidson motorcycles,

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Comcast, Time Warner confirm \$45 bn merger

NEW YORK (AFP) - Comcast unveiled plans Thursday to swallow up Time Warner Cable for \$45.2 billion in a deal merging the two largest US cable operators and boosting the power of the media-entertainment conglomerate.

The news quickly raised concerns about the reach of Comcast, which owns NBCUniversal's film and television assets and is one of the largest providers of Internet service via cable.

A joint statement said the all-stock merger "will create a leading technology and innovation company, differentiated by its ability to deliver groundbreaking products on a superior network while leveraging a national platform to create operating efficiencies and economies of scale."

Comcast chairman and chief executive Brian Roberts said: "the plan would allow Comcast to deploy new technologies for delivering streaming content and use the Internet cloud with greater efficiency."

The joint announcement of the friendly merger marks Comcast's triumph over its rival for the deal, the nation's fourth largest cable operator Charter Communications, and its biggest shareholder, Liberty Media Corp.

The deal amounts to \$158.82 per share, about \$23 a share above where TWC has been trading and comfortably above Charter's offer of \$132.50 a share, which was rejected as too low.

Comcast was already the dominant force with nearly 22 million video subscribers, compared to 12 million for Time Warner Cable, which was spun off as an independent company in 2009 from the Time Warner media-entertainment conglomerate.

The companies said the merger agreement is subject to



shareholder approval at both companies and regulatory review.

But the news immediately raised concerns, with John Bergmayer at the consumer activist group Public Knowledge urging regulators to block the deal.

"If Comcast takes over Time Warner Cable, it would yield unprecedented gatekeeper power in several important markets. It is already the nation's largest ISP, the nation's largest video provider, and the nation's largest home phone provider. It also controls a movie studio, broadcast network, and many popular cable channels."

He said that the enlarged Comcast "would be the bully in the schoolyard, able to dictate terms to content creators, Internet companies, other communications networks that must interconnect with it, and distributors who must access its content."

Craig Aaron at the advocacy group Free Press raised similar concerns, saying the deal would give Comcast a dominant share of the US pay-TV market and "triple-play" market for video, voice and Internet service.

Comcast said that in order to address competition concerns, it is prepared to divest systems serving about three million subscribers, leaving a

net gain of approximately eight million.

That would bring Comcast's managed subscriber total to roughly 30 million, the company said.

Other analysts said regulators may approve the deal but possibly impose conditions.



Battered Britain faces new winter storm

LONDON (AFP) - Tens of thousands of Britons endured a second day without power Thursday as yet another Atlantic storm barrelled towards a country struggling to deal with the wettest winter for 250 years.

The fresh band of rain, snow and strong winds was due to strike flood-hit southern Britain on Friday, two days after hurricane-force gales tore through the country leaving one person dead.

The swollen River Thames was expected to reach its highest level for 60 years at the weekend, promising fresh misery for flooded towns west of London where the military is providing relief.

Energy companies were on Thursday trying to get power back to more than 56,000 people still left without electricity, having restored supplies to 402,107 hit by outages during Wednesday's storm.

Prime Minister David Cameron said he would seek financial aid from the European Union to cope with the floods, despite his promises to renegotiate London's relationship with Brussels and hold a referendum.

Cameron said he was also seeking "expertise" from other EU nations, including "Dutch experts on pumping and dealing with flood defences".

His government has faced criticism for being slow to help people in flood-hit areas.

The Met Office said there would be a "multi-pronged attack" of wind, rain and snow striking Britain on Friday. The heavy rain could lead to more flooding as downpours of up to 40 millimetres (1.6 inches) could fall in just six hours, a spokesman said.

More than 5,800 properties have flooded since early December, officials said.

Emergency efforts were picking up following criticism

of a sluggish response, and the military said 1,600 soldiers had been deployed with 2,000 in total available.

Cameron has said that "money is no object in this relief effort".

'Smart' dog collar to be sold in Japan



TOKYO (AFP) - A high-tech collar attachment that will allow pet owners to monitor their dogs at a distance, checking how much they sleep and how many calories they are burning, was unveiled Thursday in Japan.

NTT Docomo, the country's largest mobile phone operator, said the new gadget would give smartphone users peace of mind about the animal's health and whereabouts at all times.

The "Petfit" tag, complete with a satellite positioning system, sends information to a designated mobile phone on whether a dog is sleeping, walking or running.

It also monitors how many steps a hound has taken, what the ambient temperature is and whether or not he's getting enough shut-eye.

"The number of dog owners (in Japan) is estimated at 11 million and it is regarded as a sizable market," a company spokesman said.



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Motorola chief departs for Dropbox

SAN FRANCISCO (AFP) - The head of Google-owned Motorola, Dennis Woodside, announced Thursday he is leaving the smartphone maker to become chief operating officer at the online storage firm Dropbox.

The news comes just two weeks after Google said it was selling the Motorola unit to China's Lenovo for \$2.9 billion.

Google senior vice president Jonathan Rosenberg will take up the post of Motorola chief operating officer on April 1.

The shift follows uncon-

firmed reports that Dropbox has filed for an initial public offering under a law that allows emerging companies to keep financial data confidential until just before the IPO.

Such a move would put Dropbox and the growing business of online storage into the spotlight and likely give the group hefty valuation. A recent funding round valued the California firm at some \$10 billion, according to The Wall Street Journal.

Woodside confirmed his departure in a blog post, saying he would leave Motorola at the end of March.

Oil prices drift lower; WTI holds near four-month high

NEW YORK (AFP) - Oil prices closed little changed Thursday, with the US contract near a four-month high after the International Energy Agency raised its global demand estimate and warned of tight supplies.

The main US futures contract, West Texas Intermediate for delivery in March, dipped two cents to finish at \$100.33 a barrel, holding steady near Wednesday's four-month high.

In London trade, Brent North Sea crude for March, the international benchmark, settled at \$108.73 a barrel, losing

six cents from Wednesday. The contract expired Thursday.

The market shrugged off lackluster US retail and unemployment claims data, said Matt Smith of the newsletter The Daily Distillation.

But the IEA's February report on Thursday, raising demand expectations and highlighting the depletion of stocks globally, "helped crude finish above \$100 when there

Tire giant Bridgestone fined \$425 mn for price fixing

WASHINGTON (AFP) - The US Justice Department hit Japanese tire and rubber parts giant Bridgestone with a \$425 million fine Thursday for conspiring to fix the prices of rubber parts used in US-made automobiles.

The department said Bridgestone pleaded guilty to one felony charge in the federal district court in Toledo, Ohio, and agreed to the fine.

The company had joined others in seeking to rig bids for supply contracts and fix the prices for anti-vibration rubber parts it sold to Japanese

auto manufacturers producing and selling cars in the United States between 2001 and 2008.

The manufacturers included Toyota, Nissan, Subaru, Suzuki and Isuzu.

It was Bridgestone's second US price-fixing fine in three years. In 2011, the company was fined \$28 million for joining a conspiracy to fix prices for marine hose.

The Justice Department said that the company's "failure to disclose" the price-fixing operation for automotive rubber parts was a factor in setting

the size of Thursday's fine.

The department's Antitrust Division "will take a hard line when repeat offenders fail to disclose additional anticompetitive behavior," said Deputy Assistant Attorney General Brent Snyder in a statement.

Bridgestone is one of 26 companies, mostly Japanese, which have pleaded guilty in the Justice Department's broad, multi-year investigation into price fixing in the auto parts sector.

More than \$2 billion in fines has been assessed, and 28 people have been charged.

Independent Scotland would have to leave pound: UK's Osborne

EDINBURGH (AFP) - British finance minister George Osborne warned Thursday that Scotland would have to leave the pound if it voted to become independent.

Osborne said there was "no legal reason" why the rest of the United Kingdom would have to share the pound with Scotland if its people opt to break away in a referendum on

September 18.

Backing up Osborne's speech, Britain's three main political parties joined forces to say that they would not let an independent Scotland retain the pound.

The Scottish government wants Scotland to keep sterling and stay in a currency union with Britain in the event of independence.

But Osborne told an audience in the Scottish capital Edinburgh that it would "not work" and was "not going to happen".

"If Scotland walks away from the UK, it walks away from the UK pound," he said.

Scottish First Minister Alex Salmond branded it a "concerted bid by a Tory-led Westminster establishment to bully and intimidate".

In the British government's strongest intervention in the independence debate so far, Osborne said the pound was "one of the oldest and most successful currencies in the

world".

He noted that the Scottish economy was growing faster than those of England, Wales and Northern Ireland.

Prime Minister David Cameron took a softer tone in a speech last week, urging all parts of the United Kingdom to persuade their Scottish friends and family to vote against independence.

Salmond's Scottish National Party (SNP) claims an independent Scotland would have the right to retain the pound.

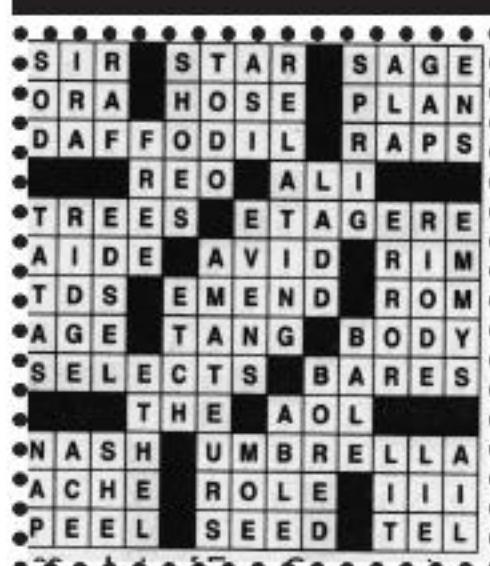
But Osborne, dismissed Salmond's warning that an independent Scotland would refuse to accept its fair share of national debt if the United Kingdom refuses to share the pound.

Osborne repeatedly cited Bank of England Governor Mark Carney's comments last month that an independent Scotland would have to cede some sovereignty if it wanted currency union, or risk the problems shown by the eurozone.



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U.S.A.	USD	1.77	1.78	1.80
Dutch Antilles	ANG	98.00	100.00	100.20
Canada	CAD	1.77	1.79	1.64
Britain	GBP	2.80	2.85	2.98
Switzerland	CHF	191.71	192.43	200.78
Netherlands	EUR	230.59	232.69	246.01
Sweden	SEK	25.91	26.63	28.18
Denmark	DKK	30.23	30.95	33.20
Norway	NOK	30.67	31.39	29.76
Japan	JPY	214.88	216.84	176.45

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- | | | | |
|------------------------------------|------------------------------|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 1. Churchill's title | 41. IM provider | 5. Commotion | Fenway |
| 4. "___ Dust" | 42. Steve of the NBA | (hyph.) | 26. ___ Janeiro (2 wds.) |
| 8. Stuffing herb | 45. Rainy day accessory | 6. "Just ___ suspected!" (2 wds.) | 27. TV awards |
| 12. "...man ___ mouse?" (2 wds.) | 50. Have a flu symptom | 7. Comparing | 29. Novices |
| 13. Sprinkler attachment | 51. Movie part | 8. Small twig | 32. ___ A Sketch |
| 14. Arrange | 52. Midafternoon, on a clock | 9. Pie ___ mode (2 wds.) | 36. Cotton bundle |
| 15. Yellow flower | 53. Slippery banana part | 10. Empty space | 38. Singer |
| 17. Taps lightly | 54. Garden need | 11. O'Toole's rank (abbr.) | Merman |
| 18. Car named after Ransom E. Olds | 55. Address bk. line | 16. Unfettered | 39. Drilled |
| 19. "The Greatest" | | 20. "Shane" actor | 41. Ready, willing, and ___ |
| 21. Orchard members | | 21. London goodbyes (2 wds.) | 42. Snooze |
| 24. Bric-a-brac holder | | 22. Crest | 43. Heroic pilot |
| 28. Officer's helper | | 23. Ford failure | 44. Pronoun |
| 29. Enthusiastic | | 24. Removes bumps | 46. Bossy Stooge |
| 30. Cup edge | | 25. Mistake at | 47. Illuminated |
| 31. Grid coups (abbr.) | | | 48. Tell untruths |
| 32. Correct | | | 49. Have woes |
| 33. CD-___ | | | |
| 34. Years lived | | | |
| 35. Orange drink brand | | | |
| 36. "___ and Soul" | 1. Turf | | |
| 37. Chooses | 2. Novelist Levin | | |
| 39. Opens to view | 3. English fliers (abbr.) | | |
| 40. "Mack ___ Knife" | 4. Loafers, e.g. | | |
- DOWN**
1. Turf
 2. Novelist Levin
 3. English fliers (abbr.)
 4. Loafers, e.g.
 5. Commotion (hyph.)
 6. "Just ___ suspected!" (2 wds.)
 7. Comparing
 8. Small twig
 9. Pie ___ mode (2 wds.)
 10. Empty space
 11. O'Toole's rank (abbr.)
 16. Unfettered
 20. "Shane" actor
 21. London goodbyes (2 wds.)
 22. Crest
 23. Ford failure
 24. Removes bumps
 25. Mistake at

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Sudoku

7								5
	5					1	4	
4	1					6		
1	3				8	5		
6								9
	9	7					6	8
	4					7	1	
	6	1					2	
4								5

SOLUTION

2	1	4	3	9	7	6	8	5
3	7	6	1	5	8	9	2	4
5	9	8	4	6	2	7	1	3
4	2	5	7	3	1	6	8	
6	8	7	2	1	4	3	5	9
1	3	9	6	8	5	2	4	7
9	4	1	5	3	6	8	7	2
8	5	3	7	2	1	4	9	6
7	6	2	8	4	9	5	3	1

Complete the grid so that every row and every column contains the numbers 1 through 9
A number is Never repeated in a row or column.
In addition every rectangle must contain the numbers 1 through 9

5 Burgers Aruba: Now your best breakfast bargain!



Delicious Breakfast

--A favorite stop for a great burger for lunch or dinner has just expanded their hours and menu to offer some of the best breakfast bargains to be found in Palm Beach. Owners Aaron and Rosie Walisever are living their dream: a home on para-

dise while welcoming all and sundry to their proud undertaking, 5 Burgers Aruba. The couple's fanatical dedication to giving their customers what they really want has resulted in a unique menu from an internationally known franchise with a "5", which now includes breakfast.

"You never get a second chance to make a first impression," believes Aaron. Upon entering 5 Burgers Aruba in The Village Mall in Palm Beach, one is struck by utterly spotless surroundings and a smiling, friendly, attentive service crew. Of course, the main item on the menu is burgers-the way they were meant to be, thick and juicy, made fresh daily and 100% pure beef, the kind that made the hamburger a traditional American treat.

However, beginning at

8am, patrons can now order 2 eggs any style (omelets with 3 fillings are \$7.99) and toast for a price of only \$4.99 or All You Can Eat Pancakes for \$6.99! A new plate called the "Home Run" comes with 2 eggs, bacon or sausage, 2 pancakes, toast & home fries - for only \$9.99! Best of all - unlimited coffee or tea - that is, refillable and never ending is only \$.79! Breakfast is served from 8am until noon. Famous for their fries made from fresh potatoes, Aaron has been working for months on devising the most irresistible home fries recipe, chunky and tender with skins still on; after much testing and tasting, he got the thumbs up from his harshest critic, Rosie, so this is another treat you have to try.

A glance at their burger menu will certainly tempt you to return for lunch or dinner, to sample their famous specialty items such as the Gouda, Farmer's or Man Burger (almost 12 ounces of choice

beef), and a Western Burger with Aaron's secret-recipe crispy onion rings. All of these can be personalized with an incredible array of toppings, (mushrooms, jalapeño peppers, bacon, cheese, lettuce, tomato...whatever, the list goes on) at absolutely no extra cost.

5 Burger portions are

watch a famous French chef demonstrating the best way to make fried potatoes on a gourmet cooking show and could only comment "He stole my recipe!"

Try them the English way-with vinegar, and you'll wonder how you ever ate fries without it. This same 5-star chef also swears by Gouda as the best topping for the ideal gourmet cheeseburger.

5 Burgers is now open early until 10-ish Sunday-Thursday; and until 3am on Friday & Saturdays.

Delivery is available to most Hotels and most beaches! Enjoy a great lunch without ever leaving the beach by calling 586-3904. However, we suggest you stop by and enjoy their authentic, heartfelt hospitality; it is not unusual for either owner to sit and chat, sharing their knowledge of the island while making sure patrons are happy with their meal.



ENORMOUS! Aaron suggests that even their small serving of fries is enough to be shared by two. He was very amused to

Gold Coast Aruba: This is the time to invest

-- Management of Gold Coast Aruba, the island's newest and most innovative gated community, reports that sales have been very good and encouraging as the global economy recovers and people looking to purchase vacation homes have found that Gold Coast is an outstanding investment value. Director of Sales, Fito Croes has noticed a surprising percentage of owners in reality do not spend a great amount of time personally to use the villas or town homes they purchase, but are taking advantage of Gold Coast's rental services to turn their investment into ready income.

"The greater portion of home owners are using their "home away from home" in Aruba to escape the winter months, or spend holidays with the family on the island," he remarked, "but I am gratified by how many are buying because they feel secure with real estate investment on Aruba. They really study the history and economy of the island and are impressed with the political stability and continually increasing value of prime locations. Gold Coast is in the heart of Malmok, considered Aruba's most exclusive community where the value of properties has only increased over time. It is only minutes to the best beaches and all the action, and yet offers a quiet and secluded getaway; we are very pleased by the response to our



concept."

Fito, with his sister Mayrin and brother Rudy operate Cas Bon, which has been constructing homes and building developments for all budgets for nearly twenty years. "Gold Coast Aruba is the jewel in our crown," observes Fito. "We were very excited about this project and the scope of actual and planned facilities and amenities. We have spoken to countless island visitors to find out what they would really want in a permanent residence on Aruba, and took from there."

Input from frequent vacationers who have dreamed of their own home in Aruba contributed to the realization of

Gold Coast Aruba which when complete will be a community of 260 town homes, villas and condominiums with a stunning clubhouse complemented by two additional community pool areas. The Clubhouse is about to start construction and will offer to the community homeowners and visitors 2 tennis courts, full service spa and fitness center as well as a stunning pool area, also house a restaurant and mini-market.

Owners who purchased upon the groundbreaking only a few short years ago, are already enjoying a nearly 50% appreciation on their investment, particularly those taking advantage of the on site management's rental services pro-

gram. There is always a great demand for Aruba and facilities such as those at Gold Coast, make it easy for some owners to see a valuable return on their investment.

The design of the residences and public areas is open, airy and spacious, taking full advantage of the island environment, with quality construction and finishing available. Partnering with two of Aruba's top providers of kitchens and bathrooms enables developers to offer custom options allowing buyers to individualize their homes. An elegant and chic furniture package is available or island designers will assist owners in finishing the décor to their spe-

cific tastes.

There are many aspects to purchasing property; not the least is the future value of the investment. To further enhance this, Gold Coast management have inaugurated a number of in-house services and have recently become affiliated Interval International, the world's largest network of vacation ownership properties which provides an unlimited international pool of investors to tap for ownership and rental prospects. Property exchange for a vacation in another destination is also available through the Interval International affiliation. Gold Coast's own rental services have also proven highly successful in assisting owners in renting their villas, 24-hour security and maintenance services also tip the scales when it is time to make a decision. Aside from all this, housekeeping, child care, catering services, car rental through its partnership with AVIS car rental are also available as well as pre-shopping services so cupboards and refrigerators are stocked upon arrival, which can also be arranged through their property management department. Personnel are also available to assist in arranging restaurant reservations and island activities.

Visit their website: www.goldcoastaruba.com for more details and availability or call 586-2200 to arrange a personal tour.

Who's winning what at the Winter Olympics

SOCHI (AFP) - Who won what at the 2014 Winter Olympics on Thursday (after six of six gold medal events):

MEN/WOMEN -

Luge - relay

Germany completed a clean sweep of luge gold medals at the Winter Olympics on Thursday when they captured the team relay title.

Natalie Geisenberger, Felix Loch and the pairing of Tobias Wendl and Tobias Arlt had already won gold in men's, women's singles and doubles respectively before making it four out of four in the new relay discipline which included one man, one woman and one doubles team.

The German team clocked 2min 45.649sec to finish 1.030sec ahead of hosts Russia, who were represented by Tatjana Ivanova, 42-year-old Albert Demchenko and the doubles team of Alexander Denishev with Vladislav Antonov.

Latvia, which featured Eliza Tiruma, Martins Rubens and brothers Andris and Juris Sics were third in 2:47.295.

MEN -

Freestyle skiing - slopestyle

Joss Christensen produced a dominant display to win the men's freestyle skiing slopestyle gold.

Christensen headed a US clean sweep of the medals with Gus Kenworthy taking silver and Nicholas Goepper winning bronze.

The result also ended Canada's monopoly of freestyle gold medals at these Games.

Just as he had done in the morning heats, Christensen produced the best two runs of the final with scores of 95.80 and 93.80.

Biathlon - 20km individual

Sharp-shooting French biathlete Martin Fourcade added the Olympic 20km individual gold to his pursuit title.

Germany's Erik Lesser took silver and Russian Evgeniy Garanichev bronze, but Norway's Ole Einar Bjoerndalen missed out in his bid to win a Winter Olympic record of 13



The German Luge Team of (L-R) Natalie Geisenberger, Felix Loch, Tobias Wendl and Tobias Arlt celebrate at the Luge Team Relay Flower Ceremony

medals when he finished in 34th after picking up four penalties.

The 40-year-old Norwegian had equalled compatriot Bjorn Daehlie's record of 12 medals when he won gold in Saturday's 10km sprint.

Defending world champion Fourcade became the first French athlete to win two golds at a Winter Olympics since Jean-Claude Killy in the 1968 Grenoble Games.

WOMEN

Nordic skiing - 10km classic

Justyna Kowalczyk of Poland broke Norway's stranglehold on the women's cross country events, destroying the field to take gold in the 10km classic style.

Kowalczyk more than justified her status of favourite, finishing in 28min 17.8sec, a colossal 18.4sec ahead of her nearest rival Charlotte Kalla of Sweden who took silver. Therese Johaug of Norway took the bronze in 28min 46.1sec.

The race took place in balmy temperatures of 13 degrees Celsius that saw many competitors strip down to T-shirts.

Kowalczyk's great rival Marit Bjoergen of Norway had

an off day by her standards, finishing in fifth place over half a minute behind the leader.

Norway had until now taken all the medals available in the women's cross country with Bjoergen winning the skiathlon and Maiken Caspersen Falla the freestyle sprint.

Short Track - 500m

China's Li Jianrou steered clear of a three-skater crash to win gold in the women's 500m short track.

Reigning gold medallist Wang Meng did not compete after breaking her ankle last month but Li, 27, kept the title in Chinese hands after her three rivals crashed on the first lap of 4.5-lap final.

She timed 45.263sec to finish nearly six seconds ahead of Italy's Arianna Fontana, bronze medallist from Vancouver, who took silver in 51.250.

Despite an initial false start Park Seung-Hi of South Korea took bronze in 54.207.

Speed skating - 1,000m

Chinese outsider Zhang Hong powered to women's 1,000m speed skating gold as her vaunted rivals struggled to match her blistering pace.

Zhang, racing in the seventh pair, clocked 1min 14.02sec and was then forced to endure an agonisingly long wait as a further 11 pairs of skaters completed two-and-a-half laps around the Adler Arena oval.

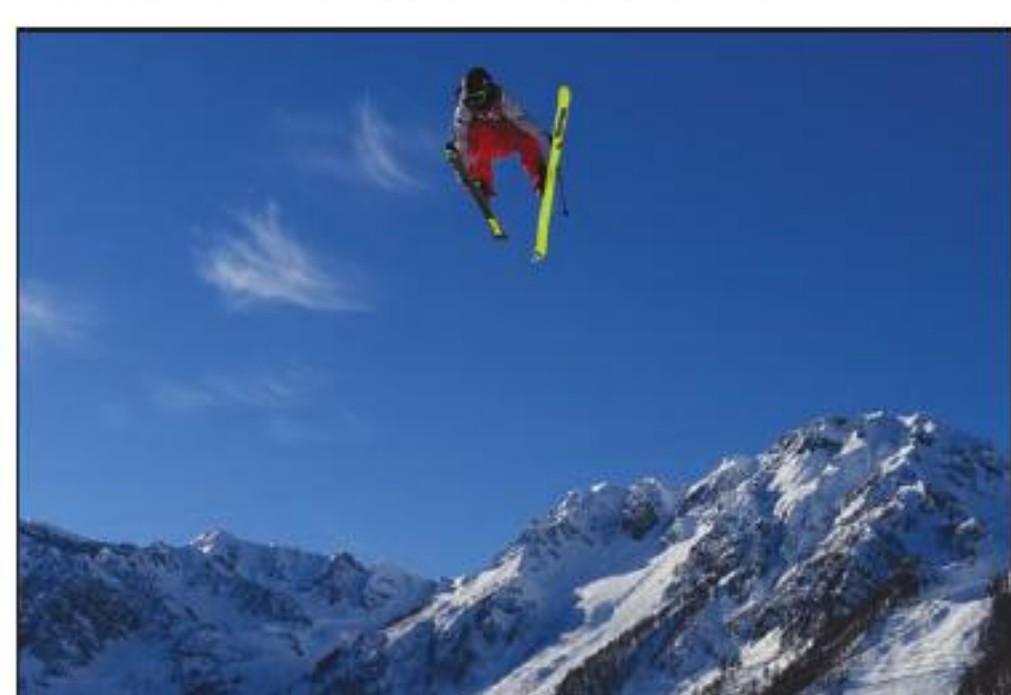
Ireen Wust of the Netherlands, who earlier won 3,000m gold, took silver in a time of 1:14.69 and compatriot Margot Boer (1:14.90) won bronze as the Dutch continued their impressive showing in the speed skating events in Sochi.



Japanese star Yuzuru Hanyu gave a stunning display to put him on the road to Olympic gold as Russian veteran Yevgeny Plushenko called time on his long career after withdrawing injured from the Sochi Games. In a dramatic night of action at the Iceberg Skating Palace 19-year-old Hanyu set a new world record score in the men's short programme to open up a 3.93-point lead on three-time world champion Patrick Chan of Canada.



A picture taken with a robotic camera shows (from L) Canada's silver medalist Denny Morrison jumping next to Netherlands' gold medalist Stefan Groothuis during the Men's Speed Skating 1000 m Medal Ceremony



United States sweep in men's freestyle slopestyle with Joss Christensen seeing off compatriots Gus Kenworthy and Nicholas Goepper.

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NBA: Ellis, Nowitzki lead Mavericks over Pacers

INDIANAPOLIS (AFP) - Monta Ellis scored 11 of his 23 points in the fourth quarter Wednesday to spark the Dallas Mavericks over Indiana 81-73, the Pacers settling for a season-low point total.

German star Dirk Nowitzki added 18 points and six rebounds for the Mavericks, who won for the sixth time in seven games, while Ellis added nine rebounds and six assists for Dallas.

Indiana fell to 40-12 on the season, dropping to the second-best mark in the NBA behind Oklahoma City's 42-12, while the Mavericks improved to 32-22, seventh in the Western Conference.

The Pacers had balanced scoring with George Hill netting 14 points, Lance Stephen-



son adding 13 points and 10 rebounds and Paul George contributed 12 points and seven rebounds.

George's jumper pulled Indiana level at 66-66 midway into the fourth quarter but the Mavericks scored the next eight points to seize command.

Brandan Wright had a jumper and a layup and Ellis and Nowitzki each had two free throws in the critical run,

which put Dallas ahead 74-66 with 3:47 to play.

A George 3-pointer from the left corner pulled the Pacers within 76-73 with 37 seconds remaining but Ellis added four late free throws to seal the Mavericks' triumph.

Dallas produced 20 points off 20 Indiana turnovers and kept the Pacers shooting only 32.1 percent, 27-of-84, from the court for the game.

Baseball: Yankees, Marlins to play exhibition in Panama

NEW YORK (AFP) - Panama will get a taste of Major League Baseball for the first time since 1947 when the New York Yankees play the Miami Marlins in an exhibition in March.

The "Legend Series" will be played on March 15-16 at Panama City's Rod Carew Stadium and will honor the legacy of newly-retired Yankees great and Panama native Mariano Rivera, the game's all-time saves leader.

Rivera, formerly the Yankees' steel-nerved star closing pitcher, will serve as one of the promoters of the affair and the series will also include charitable events off the field.

"As long as I can remember, it has been my dream to bring my team, the Yankees, to play baseball in Panama," Rivera said. "I grew up in Puerto Caimito, where I developed

my passion for baseball and began a journey that brought me to New York.

"It is my hope that this legacy series will inspire other young players to pursue their dreams. I am grateful to Major League Baseball, the Players Association, the Yankees and the Marlins in making this dream become a reality."

The games will be a rematch of the 2003 World Series and Panama will become the seventh country to host games between major league clubs (Mexico, Japan, Dominican Republic, Venezuela, Puerto Rico, and China).

In the spring of 1947, the Yankees and the Brooklyn Dodgers played exhibition games in Panama during a trip that also featured stops in Cuba, Puerto Rico and Venezuela.

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Olympics: Plushenko retires in Sochi stunner



SOCHI (AFP) - Russian skating icon Yevgeny Plushenko dramatically announced his retirement on Thursday after withdrawing from the Winter Olympics with a back injury, leaving a nation stunned and questions asked over his original selection.

The two-time gold medallist had warmed up at the Iceberg arena for the men's short programme as he began his campaign for a fifth medal and the accolade of the most successful ever Olympic figure skater.

But he felt his long-standing back injury as he gingerly attempted a series of jumps, even stumbling at one stage.

After consulting his coach, the 31-year-old gave up on his Sochi dream and waved an emotional farewell to a stunned crowd.

"Amateur sport is finished for me. Maybe not in the way that I wanted. But I leave with a gold medal, that is also

great," he told Russia's Channel One.

"I am sorry for my fans and for everybody, but I tried till the end. I almost cried. It's hard, believe me. I am very disappointed. But I tried to do my best."

Plushenko had already won gold in Sochi in the new team event for his second Olympic title after taking the men's honours at the 2006 Turin Olympics. He was also a two-time silver medallist, in 2002 and 2010.

Despite the shock of his retirement, questions were being asked over the selection of a man who underwent back surgery last year, the latest in twelve operations in his career on his back and knees.

As Russia had only one men's berth in Sochi, the possibility of substituting Plushenko would only have been allowed on medical grounds, but the deadline for replacing injured skaters passed Monday.

If he had withdrawn earlier another Russian skater, such as 18-year-old national champion Maxim Kovtun, could have taken his place.

Plushenko's coach Alexei Mishin insisted there were no selfish motives.

Asked if Plushenko would compete in another Olympics, Mishin quipped: "Not an Olympics, maybe a Paralympics".

Hugo Themen to attend weightlifting congress

ORANJESTAD - Upon the invitation of the Federacion de Levantamiento de Pesas Panamericano (FPLP), the president of AAWA, Hugo Themen, will be attending the Pan American Congress to take place from February 20 to 23 in the city of Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic. The Pan American Federation of Weightlifting is working on modifying their constitution. For this reason they need the support of all their members in the region. They are requesting the support of all participating member countries to attend the congress so they can make the right decisions regarding the future of the weightlifting sport in the Pan American continent. The Subsidy Commission of Lotto pa Deporte of Aruba is pleased to financially support Mr. Themen in attending this important Pan American Congress. It is important that we attend congresses in our continent so that we may have maximum representation of our sports federations. The Subsidy Commission and Lotto wishes Hugo Themen much success in Santo Domingo.



RIO DE JANEIRO (AFP) - Brazilian President Dilma Rousseff on Thursday used her Twitter page to blast racism in football after Peruvian fans targeted Cruzeiro's Tinga.

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Football: Brazil leader slams terraces racism

"The racism against Cruzeiro's Tinga in yesterday's game in Peru was lamentable."

"After the game, Tinga said he would swap what he has won in the game for a world with racial equality," Rousseff wrote, adding Brazil stood foursquare behind him.

And she insisted that the World Cup, "our Cup of Cups, will also be the Cup Against Racism."

Tinga said afterwards he would happily swap his career medals to win the fight against prejudice and acts of racism.

"I played in Germany for several years and sometimes encountered hostility. But I never experienced anything like this. To start with I thought it was normal chanting but then I realised it was racism."

Cruzeiro's director of football Alexandre Mattos said the club would be taking up the matter with regional confederation CONMEBOL.



RIO DE JANEIRO (AFP) - Brazilian President Dilma Rousseff on Thursday used her Twitter page to blast racism in football after Peruvian fans targeted Cruzeiro's Tinga.

Fans directed monkey chants at the veteran midfielder, who had four years with Borussia Dortmund in Germany and an earlier spell in Japan with Kawasaki Frontale.

And Rousseff swiftly came to the 36-year-old's defence after Wednesday's 2-1 Copa Libertadores loss.